

OBJECTIVE: ESTABLISH WRITTEN GUIDELINES FOR THE PURCHASE OF CAPITALIZED EQUIPMENT USING WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION (9264) DOLLARS

RATIONALE: Historically, capitalized equipment purchases (those purchases which exceed \$2500) have been limited to the use of preparedness (9131) dollars. The establishment of the Hazardous Fuels Reduction account (9263) in 1997 increased the need to purchase additional equipment such as mowers, roller choppers, and vehicles for personnel. The Service Fire Management program, aware that 9263 expenditures would be closely monitored by Congress, maintained a conservative approach to the use of 9263 dollars to purchase capitalized equipment.

The establishment of the Wildland Urban Interface Hazardous Fuels Reduction (9264) program by Congress, along with its associated treatment targets, has again increased the need for the purchase of capitalized equipment. As an example, the number of new, WUI dedicated positions within the Service is currently listed at 18. Most of these positions will require a vehicle be associated with the position. The current level of preparedness funding will not allow the purchase of additional vehicles to establish and maintain the program. As opportunities increase to use equipment to reduce hazardous fuels in the vicinity of high-risk communities, the need to purchase equipment to accomplish the objectives of the program may become substantial.

GUIDELINES:

Certain considerations to the purchase of capitalized equipment exist.

First and foremost, the intent of Congress is to contract WUI projects to the maximum extent possible. To this end, the equipment purchased must not be used to supplant the use of local contractors. In other words, every acre that can be placed under contract should be placed under contract. Equipment purchased by the government must be used to exceed what normally would be accomplished by contracting alone. One thought is this...many contractors do not have the proper equipment to do what we want them to do. Our purchasing the equipment, and their operating it on WUI projects should meet the intent of what we are supposed to do. One region is contracting at a cost of 2 or maybe 3 times what they feel they could do the work force account. Under the current administration's attitude about contracting, this is well within the realm of acceptable.

Next, the purchase of equipment must not interfere in the accomplishment of any project scheduled for the FY. In other words, a project cannot be delayed so funds may be used to purchase the equipment.

Next, the equipment purchased must be equipment that is essentially single purpose in nature, and dedicated to hazardous fuels reduction. Examples are a roller chopper, a chipper, or a chipper/mulcher. Vehicle purchase to

accommodate a WUI position will be acceptable also.

Approval for the purchase of capitalized equipment with a value in excess of \$2500 will remain with the National Office, and will require a written request for approval to the National Office. The request to purchase equipment must address the items/considerations listed above.

There is no doubt that Congress and the Administration will continue to watch our expenditures minutely. By using the highest degree of professional integrity, we can accomplish our targets and prepare to meet future needs without putting ourselves in conflict with the overall goal of the program, which is to benefit and protect the high-risk communities of the United States.